

The bill incorporates the definition in Section 1204 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, which includes “an individual involved in crime and juvenile delinquency control or reduction, or enforcement of the criminal laws (including juvenile delinquency), including, but not limited to, police, corrections, probation, parole, and judicial officers.” As a result, a Blue Alert could be issued for a state court bailiff, a state parole officer, or an officer within a state’s juvenile corrections facility, if injured in the line of duty.

Finally, I do not believe the federal government has the authority under the Constitution to provide federal funds to coordinate the tracking of state and local fugitives or to establish national protocols to apprehend suspects accused of injuring or killing state and local law enforcement officers. Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution enumerates the limited powers of Congress, and nowhere are we tasked with funding or becoming involved with state and local criminal issues.

There is no question those suspected of injuring or killing a state or local law enforcement officer in the line of duty should be aggressively pursued and prosecuted. However, I believe this issue is the responsibility of the states and not the federal government. Despite these Constitutional limitations, if Congress does act in this area, like most American individuals and companies must do with their own resources, we should evaluate current programs, determine any needs that may exist, and prioritize those needs for funding by cutting from the federal budget programs fraught with waste, fraud, abuse, and duplication.

Sincerely,

TOM A. COBURN, M.D.,
United States Senator.

TRIBUTE TO COMMANDER GEORGE KOVATCH

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee will soon bid farewell to our congressional fellow, Coast Guard CDR. George Kovatch, who has served the Committee on Appropriations over the past 3 years. Unfortunately, Commander Kovatch is retiring, so not only is his departure a loss for the Committee on Appropriations, but it is also a loss for the Coast Guard.

Commander Kovatch has been detailed to the committee from the U.S. Coast Guard since 2010 and is a key member of our professional staff. Commander Kovatch performed admirably in his role on the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee. He did everything we asked of him, with pinpoint accuracy, and always beat the deadlines given to him. I would also add that he served the committee during interesting times, perhaps more interesting than he imagined when he accepted the job. He was here for the Deepwater Horizon oilspill, the Times Square bombing attempt, the air cargo printer scare, Hurricanes Isaac and Sandy, and the Boston marathon bombing.

The Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee has greatly benefited from the experience Commander Kovatch gained as a Coast Guard officer, in particular his insights into the operations of a complex military orga-

nization that is combined with a large domestic agency. He has superb analytical skills that have been critical in our review of a \$39 billion budget request and in developing complex spreadsheets that synthesize funding issues into easily understood documents we have used in hearings, closed briefings, in full committee, and on the floor. He made critical recommendations that were adopted to improve key components within the Department of Homeland Security, most notably carefully overseeing integrity efforts following the rapid hiring of agents and officers at Customs and Border Protection as well as Immigration and Customs Enforcement to ensure that all agents, but especially new hires, receive comprehensive training in ethics and public integrity. His unqualified professionalism, perception, superb analytic focus and technical skills, combined with a keen sense of humor, a cool head, and a modesty rarely seen on Capitol Hill, have helped keep the momentum for these bills moving forward. His high standards of professionalism and thoroughness are beyond reproach, and his contributions have been highly valued.

Through all of this, George maintained the decorum and professionalism that we have all come to expect from our military officer corps, and he has represented the Coast Guard with the highest integrity and competence. Commander Kovatch has served me, this subcommittee, and the Senate well. We are sorry to see him leave and will miss him as our colleague but are glad to count him as a friend. Each of us on the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee wish George all the best as he moves forward in the next phase of his career, where we anticipate seeing great things of him in the coming years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HAM RADIO IN ALASKA

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, the American Radio Relay League is the national association for amateur radio, connecting ham radio operators around the world. Each year, the league sponsors a 24-hour Field Day in June. The weekend of June 22 to 23 was chosen for 2013.

Ham radio has a variety of uses from private recreation, to roundtable discussions, self-training to emergency correspondence. Throughout its history, amateur radio has been a tool for inventors and hobbyists to share experiences and spread ideas. Notable enthusiasts include the late Walter Cronkite, “CBS Evening News” anchor, and Nobel Prize-winning physicist Dr. Joseph H. Taylor. In the past, just by signing on one could converse with a foreign dignitary or even bounce radio waves off the Moon or aurora borealis to speak with cosmonauts aboard the International Space Station.

In Alaska, there are 16 ham radio clubs. These clubs provide a vital communication link that may otherwise not be available. This link includes checkpoint updates for the Yukon Quest and Iditarod sled dog races, support for local organizations such as the Boy Scouts, and critical forecast information to and from the National Weather Service.

In 2011, a superstorm in the Bering Sea crippled communities along the west coast of Alaska. Ham radio operators took up the task of providing real time data to local, State, and Federal weather services, as well as to emergency responders, on the condition of residents. As ham radio can operate independent of AC power or internet connection, it is well-suited to communities in rural Alaska.

Indeed, ham radio operators have been there throughout our Nation’s times of need: the 1964 Good Friday earthquake in Alaska and more recently Hurricane Katrina in the lower 48. These operators are deeply committed to public service, and they work tireless unpaid hours to maintain the flow of information.

As Alaska’s Field Day approaches, let us remember the vital role ham radio operators have played in education, science, survival, entertainment, and relationship-building in the United States.●

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL F. ADAMS

• Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Dr. Michael F. Adams, president of my alma mater, the University of Georgia, which is the first State-chartered university in America. Dr. Adams is stepping down as president on June 30, 2013, after 16 very successful years leading Georgia’s flagship university.

Dr. Adams was named president of UGA on June 11, 1997, and immediately focused on making the university one of America’s best. Under his leadership, student quality has risen dramatically, research production has increased significantly, and UGA is serving the people of Georgia and our Nation in new and innovative ways. As a result, U.S. News & World Report has ranked it as one of America’s top 20 public research universities in 8 of the past 10 years.

The UGA campus has been transformed during Dr. Adams’ presidency, with more than \$1.2 billion in new construction, renovation, and infrastructure undertaken. He created the UGA Real Estate Foundation as a funding mechanism for much needed campus projects. His dedication to making UGA’s campus one of the most breathtaking in the country is apparent. When approaching Sanford Stadium from the west end, two of the capital projects that Dr. Adams has undertaken are visible. Not only are the Richard B. Russell Special Collections Libraries and the expansion of the Tate Center a testament to the growth of the university’s physical campus, but